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# Delaware River Sojourn

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## The Delaware: Pennsylvania's 2002 Feature River of the Year

The Delaware River Sojourn, an annual event to heighten awareness of and appreciation for the historical, recreational, and environmental significance of the Delaware River through public events, educational programs and by paddling its inviting waters, celebrated its eighth and ninth years in 2002 and 2003.

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*"On behalf of all Pennsylvanians, I offer my best wishes for continued partnerships in our work to restore, maintain, and enhance the Delaware's scenic beauty, water quality and quantity. I hope you have an enjoyable and successful river journey on a truly Revolutionary River!"*

— Greetings to sojourners from  
Governor Mark Schweiker, 2002.

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Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) as the commonwealth's "Feature River of the Year" in January 2002. The feature river's sojourn is traditionally the first one to take place in June, which is American Rivers Month. The theme of the 2002 sojourn was "The Delaware: A Revolutionary River." A commemorative poster honoring the river and the sojourn's theme was created by DCNR, with the help of DRBC staff, and can be found on the front cover of this 2002-2003 report.

A special kick-off reception took place on May 31 at Grey Towers National Historic Landmark in Milford, Pa., the home of Gifford Pinchot. Pinchot, one of America's leading advocates of environmental conservation at the turn of the twentieth century, was

a former governor of Pennsylvania who also served in the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt.

The 2002 sojourn began the next day at Pond Eddy, N.Y. and eight days later finished at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge in Philadelphia. In between these points, participants not only paddled over 70 miles, but they heard from George Washington (portrayed by Robert Gerenser) before the general and several of the sojourners crossed the Delaware at the famous spot that became the turning point in the Revolutionary War. The sojourn is normally a "rain or shine" event, but a rain-swollen Brandywine Creek kept sojourners out of their canoes and kayaks for the very first time on June 7 due to safety concerns.

Sojourners also had the opportunity in 2002 to attend a special reception at the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton to honor its exhibit, "River of Leisure," which traced the Delaware's recreational uses. The DRBC provided assistance to the museum in the development of this exhibit.

The DRBC's public information office created a special 2002 sojourn scrapbook

The 2002 sojourn, which took place June 1 through June 8, was held earlier than usual for a very special reason: the Delaware was named by the



Sojourners arriving at Washington Crossing as seen from the New Jersey side of the river on day five of the 2002 event. (Photo by Chris Roberts)

to honor Pennsylvania's "river of the year," which can be viewed along with photo albums and other sojourn-related information at <http://www.nj.gov/drbc/sojourn.htm>.

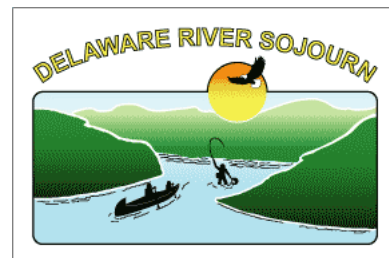
The theme for the 2003 sojourn, held from June 14-21, was "The Delaware: More Than a River." Sojourners faced above-normal river flows as well as cloudy or rainy weather for much of the week, but this was a common occurrence in the basin throughout the entire year. The event started in Callicoon, N.Y. and included about 80 miles of paddling over the next seven days. Sojourners spent the last day on the Philadelphia/Camden section of the river aboard the *North Wind*, a 75-foot schooner that is operated by Philadelphia City Sail, Inc., a nonprofit educational organization with a focus on economically disadvantaged youth in the Delaware Valley region. Earlier in the week, the sojourners participated in an "Open Space Celebration Luncheon" at the site of an old quarry located next to the Delaware River and Delaware Canal State Park in Bucks County, Pa. There they heard about the state park's plans to provide public access points to the river as well as more outdoor recreation and natural-history classroom/research opportunities on this property, which will be protected as open space.

The sojourn is planned each year by a steering committee that was chaired in 2002 by DRBC Executive Director Carol R. Collier and in 2003 by Suzanne Forbes with the Delaware River Greenway Partnership (DRGP). The committee members who served during one or both of the 2002-2003 sojourns represented the following partners, in addition to the DRBC and DRGP: Academy of Natural Sciences, American Canoe Association, Bucks County Open Space Partnership, Bucks County River Country, Central Bucks West High School Environmental Club, Delaware and Raritan Greenway, Delaware Canal State Park, Gnarly River Women Paddling Club, Kittatinny Canoes, Inc., National Canoe Safety Patrol, National Park Service (Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, and Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor), N.J.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Palmyra Cove Nature Park, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Inc., Pa. DCNR; Pa. DEP, Pa. Environmental Council, Pa. Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR), Pocono Environmental Education Center, Pocono Mountains Vacation Bureau, Inc., Princeton Hydro, LLC, and Upper Delaware Council, Inc. The steering committee is a proud affiliate member of the American Canoe Association.

Sponsors over the two years included the Rohm and Haas Company, SUNOCO, William Penn Foundation, DRBC, Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory, PPL Services Corporation, Exelon, Princeton Hydro, Aventis-Pasteur, Water Resources Association of the Delaware River Basin, Reliant Energy, Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Mirant Corporation, Delaware Family Campground, Driftstone on the Delaware Campground, Gnarly River Women Paddling Club, and the Jersey Paddler. A special thanks goes to Pa. DCNR and POWR for their valuable support.

Additional information about the 2002 and 2003 sojourns can be found on the DRBC's web site.



"Your [DRBC's] participation in this project last year significantly contributed to its success, and so I wanted to share this good news with you."

– July 25, 2003 letter from The New Jersey State Museum's Curator of Cultural History James F. Turk to DRBC Executive Director Carol R. Collier announcing that the museum was awarded a Certificate of Commendation from the American Association for State and Local History for its exhibition, *River of Leisure: Recreation Along the Delaware River and Bay*. According to Dr. Turk, this awards program is the nation's most prestigious competition in local, state, and regional history.